



DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

News Release

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**DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS ACTIVATES
RAPID RESPONSE TEAM TO ASSIST FORMER EMPLOYEES OF
KONA COMMUNITY HOSPITAL,
NORTH HAWAI'I COMMUNITY HOSPITAL**

HONOLULU – At the request of Governor Linda Lingle, the Hawai'i Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR) has activated the state's Rapid Response Team to assist employees who are to be or have been laid off recently by two local employers on the Big Island – Kona Community Hospital, and North Hawai'i Community Hospital. Rapid Response Services meetings with the affected employees will be held on the Big Island tomorrow, Thursday, July 24, 2008.

The Rapid Response Team is composed of staff from the DLIR's Workforce Development Division and Unemployment Insurance Division, Department of Human Resources Development, Department of Human Services, Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism and Department of Hawaiian Home Lands. Officials from the DLIR have been in contact with the management of the two hospitals in disseminating information to their employees.

Rapid Response Services for **Kona Community Hospital** will be held from 9:00 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. on Thursday, July 24, 2008, at the Kona Community Hospital, located at 79-1019 Haukapila Street, Kealahou, Hawai'i 96750. The company is expected to lay off 57 employees.

Rapid Response Services for **North Hawai'i Community Hospital** will be held at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, July 24, 2008, at the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands Hall (Kuhio Hall), located at 64-756 Mamalahoe Hwy., Kamuela, Hawai'i 96743. The company laid off approximately 59 employees on July 16, 2008.

The Rapid Response team will provide an array of services for these dislocated workers, including skills assessment, individual counseling, career planning, employment development, occupational skills training, on-the-job training, entrepreneurial training, job-readiness training and adult education. Participants will also be provided information regarding unemployment benefits, welfare assistance and medical benefits. Project participants may also receive out-of-area job search assistance, relocation assistance and other related supportive services. Support services may include childcare, transportation assistance and job related certifications, uniforms and equipment.

"The Administration's concern is for the employees and their families. We will work to ensure that these workers from are given every possible opportunity to find meaningful employment," said Darwin L.D. Ching, Director of Labor and Industrial Relations. "We will do everything we can to assist these workers and their ability to provide for themselves and their families during this difficult time."

DLIR activated similar Rapid Response Teams to assist with employees who were laid off by Aloha Airlines statewide and Moloka'i Ranch on Moloka'i and O'ahu.

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